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A FEW
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O B S E R V A T I O N S
R E L A T I N G T O
O L I V E R C R O M W E L L
A N D H I S
F A M I L Y;

Serving to rectify several Errors concerning Him, published by
NICOLAUS COMNENUS PAPADOPOL

In his
HISTORIA GYMNASII PATAVINI.

By a MEMBER of the ROYAL SOCIETY, and of the
SOCIETY of ANTIQUARIES, of LONDON.

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A FEW

ANECDOTES

AND

OBSERVATIONS

RELATING TO

OLIVER CROMWELL

AND HIS

FAMILY.

NICOLAUS COMNENUS PAPADOPOLI, in his *Historia Gymnasii Patavini* (Venetiis 1726,) Tom. 2. Lib. 2. cap. 50. pa. 306, 307. sect. 241. sub anno 1658, asserts "That Oliver Cromwell (the Protector) was a Member of that University in the Year 1618:" And He refers to a List of the English Students of that University, and to Oliver's Coat of Arms painted in the Piazzas of it,

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for

for Proof of what He has said. The same Writer very soon after speaks of Him, as having in the younger Part of his Life lessened his small Patrimony, by a dissolute Life and by the Length of the Time that He continued abroad upon his Travels; Part of which Time, two Years at least (He says) He spent in improving himself at Padua: And He fixes his Return into England, to that Year wherein King James the First died, and King Charles the First succeeded to the Crown; (which was the Year 1625.)

Papadopoli's own Words are these — “ 1658.
 “ CCXLI. Oliverius Cromuel Britanniae sub nomine
 “ tituloque Patroni Tyrannus, haud scio Dedecorine
 “ an Gloriam futurus Gymnasio nostro, cujus Illum
 “ *Alumnum* inficias ire non possumus, cum et An-
 “ glorum Catalogus, qui extat etiamnum *, Illum
 “ suis annumeret *Consiliariis* an. MDCXVIII, idip-
 “ sumque *Insignia* ambulacris gymnasticis appicta
 “ testentur. Natus est in *Wallia*, obscuro loco, nec
 “ ditibus clarisve Parentibus aut illustri familia;
 “ quamvis non desint qui Pronepotem Illum existi-
 “ mant Thomae Cantabrigiensis Patricii, qui princeps
 “ inter Ministros a cubiculo, praecipuus inter Con-
 “ siliarios, praefectusque secretis, Henrico VIII reg-
 “ nante, incestarum nuptiarum Auspex, tandem sce-
 “ lerum poenas dedit, ac cervice gladio Carnificis
 “ caesa probavit plerunque malis Consiliis malos Auc-
 “ torum Exitus respondere. Ut ut sit, OLIVERIUS

" natalem inopiam Adolefcens auxit lascivïa et luxu
 " ac diuturnis Peregrinationibus, quarum Partem
 " PATAVIO dedit, biennio saltem bonis hic artibus
 " addictus: *Hinc in Britanniam regressus* eo anno
 " quo, Jacobo mortuo, Carolus Rex suffectus est."
 He then proceeds — " Ductâ Cantabrigiæ Uxore,
 " *Hac impellente*, ad gerendam rempublicam sensim
 " ac dissimulanter accessit &c." Then He gives his
 Character; concluding it with a Doubt whether He
 acknowledged any Deity but his own Interest; and
 yet allows that He had Virtues mixed with his Im-
 piety and Vices, and wonderful Endowments of
 Mind. After which, He runs over his public Ac-
 tions and his Exercise of Government, till his Death;
 which He fixes to have happened on the 4th of
 the Ides of September, 1658, at upwards of Sixty
 Years of Age.

I don't mean to enter into any minute Criticisms
 upon this Gentleman's Account. Therefore I will
 not pretend to discuss " whether Oliver's ambitious
 " Views were or were not promoted by the Insti-
 " gation of his *Wife*;" only observing in general,
 " that there seems to be * no sufficient Foundation
 " for such a Charge upon Her." Neither will I
 dwell upon the Error in the *Day of his Death*, or

* The Biographical Dictionary expressly asserts " that She
 " had no Influence over him." Vol. 3. pa. 547.

in the *Age of his Life*: though it is certain that He died on the *third* Day of September 1658, aged only a few Days more than 59 *Years and 4 Months*; whereas this Author says He died "*sexagenario major, anno a cæde Caroli primi decimo, mense septimo, die quarto qui fuit Iduum Septembris an. MDCLVIII.*" (which I understand to mean the *tenth* of September, the Ides of September being the 13th) I shall presently prove "that He was born upon the 25th of April 1599:" So that He would have been but Sixty, if He had survived till the 25th of April 1659. I shall also shew "that He was born at *Huntingdon*;" and not in *Wales* (as this Writer expressly asserts.)

However, all these are but small Mistakes, which a Foreigner might easily fall into.

But his GRAND ERROR (and which He not only asserts, but even imagines that He has fully proved,) concerns no less than seven Years of this Great Man's early life, and so essential a Part of his Education, as must have been greatly conducive to the forming of his Mind; and seems quite opposite to the real Fact.

So far was OLIVER CROMWELL, the *Protector*, from having spent seven Years of his Life (from the Age of 19 to 26) in his *Travels abroad*, and in studying at *Padua*, that there is not the least
Shadow

Shadow of Reason to suspect that He was ever out of these Kingdoms at all; much less for so long a Time, and in that Part of his Life; (which, on the contrary, appears to have been chiefly spent in or near the very Parish of his Nativity.)

OUR Historians say He was entered at Sidney College in Cambridge * on the 23d of April 1616; being then just 17 Years of Age. About two Years after, in the Beginning of the Year 1618, He returned Home to his Mother. Soon after this, (at the Time when Papadopoli supposes Him to have been set out upon his Travels,) He was sent up to Lincoln's Inn: At which Time, He must have been upwards of Nineteen. Here He remained some Time: It does not appear how long. But it could not be two Years: For He was turned of Nineteen, when He came thither; and He was married before He was Two and Twenty. On his Marriage, He settled at *Huntingdon*: And after his Uncle's Death, He removed no further than into the Isle of Ely. These Facts are † agreed by our Eng-

* This is true: He was then admitted Fellow-Commoner, by the Appellation of "Oliverus Cromwell Huntingtoniensis, Tutor Magistro Ricardo Howlit." But (having been entered a Fellow-Commoner) his Name occurs no where else but in the Registry-Book.

† And yet it does not appear (upon Search) "that He ever was admitted of Lincoln's Inn:" though his Son and Heir apparent, Richard, was so, on the 27th of May 1647; (and Mr. John Thurlow was one of his Securities.)

lish Writers: It is sufficient to specify two of the latest, *viz.* the New General Biographical Dictionary (Edit. 1761.) Vol. 3. pa. 516, 517, 518. Title, "Cromwell;" and Mr. Harris's Life of Oliver Cromwell (published in 1762) pa. 3. to 9.

I propose to confirm the *Improbability*, I might almost have said the *Impossibility* of Oliver's long Travels during these particular seven Years, by a Proof from the REGISTER of St. John's Parish in *Huntingdon*, including the same specific Years; a Copy of which Register (as far as it relates to the Cromwells) I have obtained from Huntingdon, by the favor of a worthy and curious Gentleman of that Place, Mr. Edward Ferrar; who (by the way) observes that they have no Traces, in that Neighbourhood, of Oliver's having led a dissolute Life.

This Extract from the Register of St. John's Parish in Huntingdon, which Mr. Ferrar has been so obliging as to send me, includes Six of the Family, *prior* to the Protector Himself: But I will begin with Him, at present. .

25th April 1599. Oliverius, filius Roberti Cromwell
Gen. et Eliz. uxoris ejus, natus 25. April
1599. et bapt. 29.

22d February 1600, Margaret Cromwell, Daughter
of Robert and Elizabeth.

2d January

2d January 1602. Ann Cromwell, Daughter of Robert and Elizabeth.

19th January 1605. Jane Cromwell, Daughter of Robert and Elizabeth.

18th January 1608. Robert Cromwell, Son of Robert and Elizabeth.

4th April 1609. Robert Cromwell *buried*.

2d June 1611. Joan Cromwell *married* to Mr. William Baker.

20th June 1617. Margaret Cromwell *married* to Mr. Valentine Walton.

These that follow are (as I take it) the Protector's own Children.

8th October 1621. Robert Cromwell, Son of Oliver, Esq;

6th February 1622. Oliver Cromwell, Son of Oliver, Gent.

5th August 1624. Bridget Cromwell, Daughter of Oliver, Esq;

4th October 1626. Richard Cromwell, Son of Mr. Oliver.

20th January 1627. Henry Cromwell, Son of Oliver, Esq;

2d July 1629. Eliz. Cromwell, Daughter of Oliver, Esq;

8th January 1631. James Cromwell, Son of Oliver.

9th February 1636. Mary Cromwell, Daughter of Oliver, Gent.

Note; The three first of these eight were born *before* the Death of King James the first.

I flatter Myself, that it now stands sufficiently proved " That Oliver Cromwell, the *Protector*, did " *not* reside in *Italy*, but in *England*, during the last " 7 Years of the Reign of King James the first."

Papadopoli must consequently be under a gross Mistake concerning the IDENTITY of the Person, at least. However his Proofs do seem to shew " that " *some* Person of the *same Name* was at Padua at " that Time."

I was very desirous to discover *what* Oliver Cromwell This was; and to that End, I made Inquiry after the Register of *Hinchinbrooke*, where Old Sir Oliver Cromwell, the elder Brother of the Protector's Father, lived: But I am informed " that there " is * no Register there."

This Old Sir Oliver sold his Estate, in his own Life-time, to the Ancestor of the now Earl of Sandwich: And I am told " that He *left no Children*". In his old Age, He lived at Ramsey: And Sir Philip Warwick * visited Him there.

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Pa.

There was an *Oliver Cromwell Esquire* of *Huntingdon*, who was a married Man in 1586, and till 1594: For in the Register of St. John's Parish in Huntingdon it appears "that He had three Children born there within that Space of Time;" viz.

25th August 1586. Henry Cromwell, Son of Oliver Esq;

14th May 1589. John Cromwell, Son of Oliver and Elizabeth.

15th May 1594. Catharine Cromwell, Daughter of Oliver Esq;

It does not appear *Who* this *Oliver Cromwell Esquire* was. He might be Sir Oliver Himself (before He was made a Knight;) Who might have then resided at * Huntingdon; and Who might have had * H several Children born, and even grown up, though broo with Mil. Hun don None of them might live long enough to survive Him. Sir Oliver was of a sufficient Age of Life to be married, and have Children in those respective Years: For his younger Brother, Robert, (the Protector's Father) was married and had a Daughter in 1593. One of his Sons might have been named *Oliver*; and would probably have been of a proper Age for studying at Padua and making the Tour of Italy, between the Years 1618 and 1625.

Though it might, in *bare Possibility*, have happened that Sir Oliver Himself did so, yet it is *very unlikely*, both from his Age of Life, (which could not then be less than sixty or thereabouts,) and from his being settled at Hinchinbrooke long before that Time; where He gave King King James the First, just after his Accession to the Throne of England, the grandest Entertainment that had been given to a King by a Subject. In Reality, it can hardly be thought that this *Sir Oliver* should be the Person who did not return from his Travels till the Year in which King James died and King Charles came to the Crown.

What *Other* Oliver Cromwell might do so, remains quite in the Dark.

There appear only three other Cromwells, in my Extract from the beforementioned Register, Who were born *before* the Protector; (and they seem to have been an elder Brother and two Sisters of the Protector:) viz.

14th October 1593. Elizabeth Cromwell, Daughter of Robert and Elizabeth.

13th August 1595. Henry Cromwell, Son of Robert and Elizabeth.

7th February 1596. Catharine Cromwell, Daughter of Robert and Elizabeth.

I have

I have alledged One Fact, very material to the Point in question, namely, " That Oliver Cromwell, " the Protector, was *married* before the Age of " twenty-two:" Which, it may be said, I have not formally and directly proved. But I have shewn " that He had a Son (* Robert) born upon the " 8th of October 1621:" Which amounts to a sufficient *consequential* Proof " that the Father was a " *Married Man* some considerable Time before the " 25th of the preceding April". And " that He was " not two and twenty *till* the 25th of April 1621," is most clearly manifest from the Huntingdon Register, which *ascertains* his *Birth* to have been upon the 25th of April 1599.

N. B. This Register *settles the † Doubt* amongst our Historians, " Whether he was born upon the " ‡ 24th *or* upon the || 25th of that Month."

Inner Temple,
24th June 1763.

* This Robert died in his Infancy: And so likewise did his next Brother Oliver.

† See Biogr. Dict. Vol. 3. pa. 516.

‡ According to Mr. Harris, pa. 1.

|| So the Generality of Writers have said.

P. S. I will add, for the Curiosity of such as attend to Heraldry, a Note of the Ensigns Armorial painted upon the Escutcheons used at the Protector's Funeral: viz. Impaled Baron and Femme, First, for Himself, Quarterly, 1st and 4th Argent, a Cross Gules (for England;) 2d Azure, a Saltire Argent (for Scotland;) 3d Azure, a Harp Or, stringed Argent (for Ireland;) In an Escutcheon of Pretence, Sable, a Lyon rampant Argent, (for his paternal Coat;) And, Secondly, for his Wife, Sable, 3 Leopards passant, in Pale, Or, spotted of the first. * The Crown over the Escutcheon was composed of Crosses Patonce and Leaves, (like that of the Prince of Wales;) with an Arch joining crossways over the red Cap of Velvet, but not rising so high as the Regal Crown.

* Note : He would not assume the Arms of France; being in strict Alliance with that Crown.

F I N I S.